



## CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

14 MARCH 2017

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### (U) CALIFORNIA

#### (U) Costa Mesa – Ex-Student Arrested after Racist Graffiti Carved into Security Vehicles

(U) Authorities arrested a Costa Mesa resident after racist graffiti was carved into the hoods of two Orange Coast College security vehicles, authorities said. College public safety officers indicated the act may have been carried out by a former student who had been expelled and had previous altercations with an officer. When Costa Mesa police went to the man's house he made some admissions that he had been involved with the vandalism. Robert McDougal, 21, was arrested on suspicion of felony vandalism and a hate crime. He was booked into Orange County Jail with bail set at \$20,000.

SOURCE: 13 March 2017, [Los Angeles Times](#)

### (U) NATIONAL

#### (U) District of Columbia – US Hate Crimes Up 20 Percent in 2016

(U) Washington – Hate crimes in nine US metropolitan areas rose more than 20 percent last year, fueled by inflamed passions during the presidential campaign and more willingness for victims to step forward, a leading hate crimes researcher said yesterday. Bias crimes appeared to increase in some cities following the 8 November election of President Donald Trump, a trend that has extended into this year with a wave of bomb threats and desecrations at synagogues and Jewish cemeteries, according to California researcher Brian Levin. The new numbers, collected from police departments, reverse a trend toward fewer hate crimes in many of the cities in recent years. Among US cities, New York reported the greatest number of hate crimes at 380, a 24 percent increase from 2015, while Washington, DC, had the largest percentage rise at 62 percent to 107 incidents.

SOURCE: 13 March 2017, [Reuters](#)

#### (U) Florida – Florida Zika Risk Potentially Impacting Greater Zone than Initially Reported

(U) Miami – Local transmission of the Zika virus in Florida may have occurred as early as 15 June 2016 and likely infected people who lived not only in Miami-Dade County, but in two nearby counties, US health officials said yesterday. The information is concerning because Zika has been shown to cause birth defects in women who become infected while pregnant. Previously, the CDC had warned of the risk of Zika in Miami-Dade County, beginning on 29 July 2016. But the new warning dials that risk back to 15 June, and adds in both Broward and Palm Beach Counties, home to the major tourist destinations of Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach. The World Health Organization last year declared Zika a global health emergency because of its link in Brazil with thousands cases of the birth defect microcephaly, which is marked by small head size and underdeveloped brains that can result in severe developmental problems.

SOURCE: 13 March 2017, [Reuters](#)

### (U) INTERNATIONAL

#### (U) Congo – Two UN Officials of US, Swedish Nationality Kidnapped

(U) Ngombe – Two UN officials of American and Swedish nationality have been kidnapped in Congo's

Kasai Central province, the Congolese government said yesterday. Its statement said Michael Sharp, a US citizen, and Zaida Catalan, of Swedish nationality, had "fallen into the hands of negative forces not yet identified", along with four Congolese they were with near the village of Ngombe. Sharp and Catalan were among a UN panel of experts investigating the conflicts that have been simmering in Congo since the mid-1990s, when a civil war spawned dozens of armed groups and drew in half a dozen neighboring armies. A UN spokesman said they were missing and that UN peacekeepers were searching for them, without giving further details. The government statement gave no date for the incident.

SOURCE: 13 March 2017, [Reuters](#)

**(U) Germany – Police Raid Flats, Shut Down Mosque Visited by Berlin Truck Attacker**

(U) Hildesheim – German authorities raided apartments linked to a mosque in the city of Hildesheim visited by Tunisian failed asylum seeker Anis Amri, who drove a truck into a Berlin Christmas market in December and killed 12 people. The local state interior ministry said more than 300 police searched the apartments of eight people and shut down the mosque and the association which ran it, saying it recruited young Muslims to join ISIS militants in Iraq and Syria. Authorities raided the mosque in the summer of 2016 over suspicions that it was radicalizing Muslims and encouraging them to travel to war zones in Syria and Iraq.

SOURCE: 14 March 2017, [Reuters](#)

**(U) Japan – Military to Send Largest Warship to South China Sea**

(U) Tokyo – Japan plans to dispatch its largest warship on a three-month tour through the South China Sea beginning in May in its biggest show of naval force in the region since World War Two three sources said. The Izumo helicopter carrier will make stops in Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka before joining the Malabar joint naval exercise with Indian and US naval vessels in July. China claims almost all the disputed waters and its growing military presence has fueled concern in Japan and the West, with the United States holding regular air and naval patrols to ensure freedom of navigation.

SOURCE: 14 March 2017, [Reuters](#)

**(U) Somalia – Pirates Hijack First Commercial Ship Since 2012**

(U) Alulay – Pirates have hijacked an oil tanker with eight Sri Lankan crew onboard, a Somali official said today, the first time they have successfully taken a commercial ship since 2012. Experts said the ship was an easy target and ship owners were becoming lax after a long period without many attacks. The Aris 13 sent a distress call yesterday, turned off its tracking system and altered course for the Somali port town of Alulay. Pirates in the town confirmed they were expecting the ship.

SOURCE: 14 March 2017, [Reuters](#)

**(U) SOUTHWEST BORDER**

**(U) California- Smuggled Girl Abandoned Near Border**

(U) Calexico- Border Patrol agents found a 4-year-old girl soon after she was abandoned by smugglers east of Calexico on 13 March. Agents spotted people crossing the border near Mount Signal before returning to Mexico. On the US side, agents found the girl standing alone on the side of the road with her birth certificate. The child was interviewed before being turned over to Health and Human Services to await an immigration status hearing. She is a citizen of Guatemala.

SOURCE: 13 March 2017, [LA Times](#)

**(U) Texas- Border Patrol Agents Seize \$200k of Meth**

(U) Presidio- Customs and Border Patrol agents seized roughly \$200,000 worth of methamphetamine hidden in a car battery on 10 March. Agents seized about 5.7 pounds of a crystalline substance that later

tested positive for meth. The driver, a 30-year-old Mexican citizen, has been arrested and detained by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The drugs were discovered during a secondary inspection of the vehicle.

SOURCE: 13 March 2017, [El Paso Times](#)

**(U) Texas – Marijuana Fields Tied to Mexican Drug Cartel; Authorities Arrest Three**

(U) Smith County – Authorities arrested three people and 10 more suspects are sought in connection with a widespread East Texas drug trafficking operation with ties to a Mexican drug cartel. Authorities were able to locate 15 marijuana plantations associated with the Los Zetas cartel in East Texas and seize 77,000 plants with an estimated worth of more than \$101 million. Law enforcement officials identified Eduardo Ramirez Pineda as a leader of the local drug trafficking organization. Pineda oversaw the daily operations of the marijuana cultivation sites in East Texas. Pineda and Benito Duarte Ramirez are considered fugitives and are among the 10 suspects being sought in connection to the crime.

SOURCE: 12 March 2017, [Tyler Morning Telegraph](#)

**(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.**

**(U) FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE EMAIL [STAC@CALOES.CA.GOV](mailto:STAC@CALOES.CA.GOV), OR CALL 916-874-1100.**

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